

A photograph of sunlight filtering through a dense canopy of trees, creating a bright starburst effect in the center. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient that transitions into a yellow horizontal band at the bottom.

# O Beloved

*A Message from Kay Arthur*

**Conspiracy, *The Da Vinci Code*,  
and the Bible**

**By Rick Purdy with Aimee Hammond**

(excerpts from Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, New York: Doubleday, 2003)



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Beloved, I asked Dr. Rick Purdy, our Editorial Manager, to investigate and report on the best-seller novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, in the light of Biblical Truth. This is challenging reading, but I know you'll be blessed if you take your time and prayerfully consider how effectively the Word of God responds to its worst critics.

## Conspiracies: Speculations, Bad Motives, Big Cover-ups

**"Everyone loves a conspiracy"  
(Robert Langdon, DVC, p. 169)**

"Scientists have discovered a cure for cancer, but the Government won't release it because cancer is big business!"; "Fidel Castro set up Lee Harvey Oswald to assassinate President Kennedy!"; "The moon landing was a hoax!"; "Puff the Magic Dragon' is about marijuana"; "George Bush's invasion of Iraq smells of oil!"

Heard any of these? What are these claims, and what do they have in common? They're conspiracy *theories*, *not conspiracies* (you can "conspire" good as well as evil). These five share not just speculations but also bad motives and big cover-ups—nasty schemes, wild secrets, subversive knife-in-the-back actions. Appealing to natural curiosity but also, unfortunately, to our worst nightmares and love of gossip, they make us suspicious of people and organizations we've trusted in the past, sometimes our entire lives.

The weaker theories that feed gossip are easily dispelled by careful examinations of facts. But occasionally one arises that is so inventive (seamlessly weaving conjecture, fiction, and fact) and diabolical that it lures the unsuspecting down intriguing paths that end in confusion and doubt about matters of faith.

*That's why we're writing this booklet—to arm you with God's Word as a spotlight to shine into the dark recesses of one popular conspiracy theory and expose it for what it is: shadowy figures and fantasies that vanish under the light of Truth.*

## *The Da Vinci Code* Conspiracies

That theory is found in the *New York Times* best-seller, *The Da Vinci Code*, Dan Brown's blockbuster fiction novel described by the *Washington Post* as "Unputdownable" and commended by the *New York Daily News* for its "impeccable research."

The author skillfully blends a striking array of historical data and research with a *progressively* intriguing and thrilling murder mystery. We can't demean in any way the creative genius of this author, and we don't plan to tell "whodunit."

We do want to shed light on something infinitely more significant, and that is the claim by one of three "academic" characters in the novel that *Western Religion, particularly the Hebrew-Christian faith, is itself a conspiracy*—one that either plans and carries out murders of its own: "During three hundred years of witch hunts, the Church burned at the stake an astounding five *million* women," (p. 125) or suppresses threats: ". . . the Church has two thousand years of experience pressuring those who threaten to unveil its lies" (p. 407). The theory and these "facts" are allegedly supported by the extensive research and productions of hundreds of authors, historians, symbologists, artists, music composers, pagans, and lay (Holy) Grail hunters across the full two millennia of Church history.

The chief protagonist for this conspiratorial theory is multi-millionaire, former British Royal Historian (p. 216) and professional Grail researcher, Sir Leigh Teabing. Two other characters—Harvard Symbologist Robert Langdon and Cryptologist Sophie Neveu—figure prominently in the unfolding mystery, but Teabing comes to center stage as the dominant spokesman for pagan theory.

The pagans' immediate target is the Roman Catholic Church, but the Church's *private* conspiracy falls within the broader scope of a *general* conspiracy theory that Western Religion itself (including Islam) is the male-chauvinistic, arch-nemesis of the pagan-religion goddesses of Nature. The key 21<sup>st</sup>-century player-enemies in the book are *real* organizations: the female-loving "good guys"—a European secret society founded in 1099 called *The Priory of Sion*—and the female-bashing "bad guys"—the Roman Catholic Church, represented most radically in modern times by a Vatican prelature known as *Opus Dei* ("God's Work"), whose headquarters is in New York City. These modern organizations stand in for the conflict between pagans and Christianity that has been going on for 2,000 years. Each group has its own agenda, its own conspiracy.

What conspiracies? *The conspiracies to preserve and protect (pagans) or search and destroy (the Catholic Church) documents that allegedly prove Jesus married Mary Magdalene to secure legal title to David's throne for Himself and for His literal children.* Details of Mary's later move to France (the Western theory) or Turkey (the Eastern theory), her production of a line of Jesus kids and grandkids (pp. 255-58), and the historic clashes between the Catholic Church and the Priory of Sion are not as significant as Sir Leigh Teabing's missile attacks on the very foundations of Christian faith . . .

**The Bible.** The first missile is direct and assertive:

“The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven. . . . The Bible is a product of man. . . . Not of God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book . . . . More than *eighty* gospels were considered for the New Testament . . . . [which was] collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great.” (p. 231)

“It was *man*, not God, who created the concept of ‘original sin,’ whereby Eve tasted of the apple and caused the downfall of the human race [note: this is attributed to Adam, not Eve, in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15]. Woman, once the sacred giver of life, was now the enemy. . . . Christian philosophy decided to embezzle the female's creative power by ignoring biological truth and making *man* the Creator. Genesis tells us that Eve was created from Adam's rib. Woman became an offshoot of man. And a sinful one at that. Genesis was the beginning of the end for the goddess” (p. 238).

**Jesus Christ.** Teabing refers to Him as . . .

“a historical figure of staggering influence . . . the prophesied Messiah [who] toppled kings, inspired millions, and founded new philosophies . . . rightful [heir] to the throne of the King of the Jews” (231), but not “an [divine] original”; rather, Jesus can be identified with “The pre-Christian God Mithras—[who was] called *the Son of God* and *the Light of the World* . . . born on December 25, died . . . buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days.” (p. 232).

Emperor Constantine designed and manufactured Jesus' deity at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. Just off paganism himself (supposedly) at the time, he "was a very good businessman. He could see that Christianity was on the rise, and he simply backed the winning horse" (p. 232). Carefully notice Teabing's wording, which hints at a contradiction (bold words) we'll address later:

" . . . until *that* moment in history [A.D. 325], Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet . . . a great and powerful man, but a *man* nonetheless. A mortal. . . . By officially **endorsing** Jesus as the Son of God, Constantine **turned** Jesus into a deity who existed beyond the scope of the human world, an entity whose power was unchallengeable" (p. 233, bold added).

"Many scholars claim that the early Church literally *stole* Jesus from His original followers, hijacking His human message, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of divinity, and using it to expand their own power" (233).

***Canonizing Scripture to Suppress Evidence of Jesus' Secret Family.*** To help promote Jesus to God-status, Constantine's so-called "canonization process" included the burning of 76+ gospels that emphasized Jesus' humanity. By doing so, he hoped to put Jesus' ability to make babies far enough into the background to make counter-claims incredulous.

Unfortunately for Christians *today* (so the theory goes on), Constantine didn't get all the copies. Even worse for believers throughout *all* centuries, secret organizations like the Knights Templar and Priory of Sion have preserved and hidden more damaging testimony—the physical body of Mary and "four chests" (p. 256) of genealogical records that "tell the true story of her life" (p. 257) and trace her progeny (the "Merovingian bloodline," p. 257) back to their dad, Jesus (pp. 257, 8). Purportedly, the Knights Templar recovered these documents beneath the Holy of Holies under Herod's temple, following a ten-year search (pp. 258, 9).

The Catholic Church periodically attempted to seize these materials by rounding up—to extort, torture, and murder—members of these organizations (p. 157); but when the roundups didn't get *everyone* (which was most of the time), they alternately paid survivors to hide the documents, forced to settle for control over what they couldn't destroy—both men and paper. *That* cost them a great deal of money, explaining the "sudden" wealth of the Knights Templar at one point in history (p. 159).

The Catholic Church continued this tradition of suppressing evidence detrimental to its political authority right into the 20<sup>th</sup> century—case in point, the Dead Sea Scrolls:

“. . . the Vatican, in keeping with their tradition of misinformation, tried very hard to suppress the release of these scrolls. And why wouldn't they? The scrolls highlight glaring historical discrepancies and fabrications, clearly confirming that the modern Bible was compiled and edited by men who possessed a political agenda—to promote the divinity of the man Jesus Christ and use His influence to solidify their own power base” (p. 234).

*All this bother just to drop women to second-class status—from the equality they once held in the primitive but more sublime pagan religions:*

“. . . powerful men in the early Christian church 'conned' the world by propagating lies that devalued the female and tipped the scales in favor of the masculine” (p. 124).

“The Church, in order to defend itself against the Magdalene's power, perpetuated her image as a whore and buried evidence of Christ's marriage to her, thereby defusing any potential claims that Christ had a surviving bloodline and was a mortal prophet” (p. 254).

Noticeably lacking female popes, cardinals, bishops, and priests, the Roman Catholic Church stands in stark contrast to . . .

“. . . the Priory [which] always had women members. Four Grand Masters had been women. The *sénéchaux* [the only-four-at-a-time who knew the whereabouts of the Grail, p. 205] were traditionally men—the guardians, and yet women held far more honored status within the Priory and could ascend to the highest post from virtually any rank” (p. 444).

That pretty much sums up the pagan position.

While *The Da Vinci Code* is an outstanding murder mystery, to fully enjoy it you should be aware that there are solid answers to Teabing's radically-pagan, feminist shot at supernatural revelation—biblical doctrine and ethics. That's why we're writing this booklet—not to spoil the mystery, but to put you on guard!

## Responding

How do we answer Teabing's stupendous claims that *generally* represent Naturalism and *particularly* reflect pagan thought? Let's take them one at a time. Keeping in mind that an artfully-crafted conspiracy theory always weaves enough facts into its fiction to make the fiction believable, let's unravel the conspiracy and separate speculations from truth.

**The Bible.** We can agree with some of what Teabing says in the above section. There were no faxes when the Bible was recorded, but if there had been, God certainly would have owned the best—probably a Sharp. But He wouldn't need it. The hidden fallacy here is that the One who controls the thought processes of creatures (Exodus 35:34; 36:2; Deuteronomy 28:28; 1 Kings 10:24; Ezekiel 14:9; Daniel 4:23; Jeremiah 24:7; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 17:17) needs dictation equipment or fax machines—physical mechanics per se—to convey truth. Critics who don't believe God is sovereign over man's thinking limit the definition of "revelation" to perception (sight and sound) options that merely reflect an anti-supernatural bias. But inerrant mental and lingual revelation is simply one miniscule expression of a universal sovereignty. Once God speaks a universe into being *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), speaking a parting of the Red Sea and productions and collations of biblical books *is nothing . . . zip!*

We can also agree that man *is* a secondary cause of the Bible, so in one sense it *is* a "product of man." It *didn't* "fall magically from the clouds." Man *did* record "tumultuous times." The Bible *has* been translated into numerous languages, although as new revelation came the old was subject to new interpretation but never contradiction requiring "revisions," and once the canon was established it was no longer subject to "additions" (as, e.g., a New Testament book added to the Old: see 1 Corinthians 9:1; Ephesians 2:20 Hebrews 1:1, 2; Jude 1:3; Revelation 22:18, 19).

*What do we disagree with?* The "Not of God" part. This is baseless assertion, not proof, and no mesmerizing conversations about symbols in the entire novel prove that God cannot and did not cause His thoughts to be recorded in human language. Biblical authors didn't record just "tumultuous" events either—a worthless enterprise in itself: events without meaning and purpose. They recorded ethical absolutes and propositional truths about God and man, origin and destiny, in one absolute, non-contradicting Volume of 66 books over the course of 1500 years. We say one "Volume" with a capital "V," one Bible, because the books agree not just on right and wrong, but also on

doctrine—God’s immutable holiness, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, man’s fall from moral absolutes, sin, redemption and Redeemer, and eternal destiny. They present a historiography, the flow *and meaning* of history, not just *bare, unrelated* events.

We can agree with Teabing on another point, *if we qualify it*: the Scriptures do in fact record the *unique* “tumult” of many who rebelled against God—against His Law, particularly against His marriage covenant. Judgments on *every* defiant sexual alternative to marriage run from Genesis through Revelation in dozens of lives that end in tragedy. This consistent theme seems to have escaped the pagans’ ritual-sex-distracted notice. (Pagans continue Jesus’ blood line through *ritual* procreation, pp. 308-10.)

More contrary to Teabing, ***history has always had a “definitive version” of God’s revelation in every age.*** “Definitive” has nothing to do with the shapes called “symbols” (characters, letters), the sounds, or the styles of language. Revelation is not a certain size or color (black ink on white paper) or material (leather); it’s not Chinese or English; it’s not style and it’s *not* metaphor, as in “God is *like* or *sort of* or *kind of* Love or Omnipotent or . . . whatever.” Revelation is the simple attachment of a predicate to a subject—“God is Love”—a proposition clear as a bell. If we claim ignorance of this truth because “we don’t know what ‘love’ is,” we can go elsewhere in the Bible to find *its* definition as well (as in John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). God has given plenty of information, exactly the right amount man needed at every moment of history, and those who contradict or call confusing what He calls clear are taking the ultimate risk (Daniel 4:35)!

God could first communicate with Adam without a written Bible because He built into Adam’s mind the *logic* of language as well as basic *concepts* (definitions) like a “Thou,” a “shalt,” a “not,” an “eat,” a “from,” a “the,” a “tree,” an “of,” a “knowledge,” a “good,” and an “evil” (recognize the command?). Adam didn’t say “Huh?” or ask what a “tree” was, and he didn’t respond with a grunt! His logic (part of the “image of God” he was made in) made him able to distinguish “tree” from all “not-tree”s (like “that rhino over there”), absolute right from absolute wrong, absolute obedience from absolute disobedience. He spoke the pre-Babel universal language from which all language groups descended (Genesis 11:1). Even popular philosophers like Immanuel Kant and linguist Willard Quine agree that built-in logic and terms make more sense, respectively, of learning in general and of the *evolution* of languages than *any evolutionary* theory that tries to deduce communication

from unintelligible whines and grunts. These famous men may be secularly handicapped to explain how “built-in” came to be, but this is no problem for *creationists*. Thought came first (God’s plan), then speech (creation and conversation) . . . *then* symbols—letters (that make up Bibles) and other signs.

***Constantine, the Canon, and the Deity of Christ.*** Constantine neither collated the first nor engineered the second. The early Church was quoting (what became) canonical books as authorities for nearly two centuries before he was born. One criterion the Church used for authenticity was apostolic authorship (see last verses listed two pages back), another, theological consistency (that’s why *Hebrews* was included without an author). The rejected gospels and other books contained some truth, but always mixed in with enough speculation, fantasy, and inconsistency with the authoritative books to justify their exclusion. A good example is the (probably intentional) fictions that filled the Gospels’ historical gaps (silences) with sensational stories, like the Infancy narratives that made the pre-teen Son of God out to be a malevolent pest, who temperamentally injures and sometimes even kills other children for minor offenses (*Thomas’s Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ* 2:1-20; Jesus is *blamed* for these actions in vv. 5, 12, 13). A *child* could have screened these fantasies out from the inspired books.

Historians generally conclude that Constantine didn’t have the skill set to arbitrate the doctrinal issues between Arians (the Jehovah’s Witnesses of the day) and Trinitarians at the Nicene Council, which is why he allowed the Church to vote on the creed. But the very vote proves he didn’t *make* it happen. In the book, Teabing admits as much, but in so doing he contradicts himself—the people’s vote *can’t at the same time* be the emperor’s dictate (cf. “**endorsing**” vs. “**turned**” several pages back). The fact that the vote was “close” does not prove that the issue was insolvable, requiring the services of a politician to arbitrarily select and enforce one side. Post-Nicene Council history shows Constantine politically bending to whoever came to town and knocked on his palace doors—sometimes Arius, sometimes Athanasius (who represented Trinitarianism). Essentially soldier-turned-politician (not a theologian), he proved time and time again that he was willing to purchase *Pax Romana* (“Roman Peace”) at any cost. (This is evidenced by several other post-“conversion” enigmas as well, but we don’t need to belabor the point.)

He neither designed nor produced the biblical canon or the deity of Christ. He sat back and watched it all happen by the same supernatural Providence that controlled the thinking necessary to produce the inerrant thoughts to script the

inerrant words in the first place. To sum up, *there was no politically-engineered canonization process*. Non-supernatural collection theories can never explain the 1500-year theological consistency and majestic ethics of the Bible that were *recognized by biblical authors the moment they were spoken*. God predestined the canon, He “canonized”; it was His supernatural product from start to finish, and that start was from eternity (1 Corinthians 2:7; Revelation 14:6)! His sovereignty didn’t end with the book of Revelation!

Teabing’s theory that Constantine intentionally eclipsed Jesus’ humanity with a creedal divinity doesn’t fit his own claim that the emperor was “a lifelong pagan who was baptized on his deathbed, too weak to protest” (p. 232). Nor does the fact that thousands of Christians believed in Christ’s deity (Trinitarians *and Arians*) centuries before any formula (creed) was fixed. Nor does the Roman Catholic exaltation of Mary to “Mother-of-God” status (better than any pagan goddess ever had it!). Nor does the later Chalcedonian formula that states that the Orthodox *always believed in the full humanity of Jesus*—sperm count and all!

As for Teabing’s claim that the true Church of Jesus Christ has murdered 5 million *women* . . . Nonsense! Even if pagans can document 500 killings, they still have to prove that the murders were done by born-again followers of a Man who said His servants don’t fight to establish His kingdom (John 18:36). And how will they establish that . . . without asking the One who knows His own and won’t tell (2 Timothy 2:19)?

Concerning Jesus aggravating His disciples by sneaking off with Mary Magdalene for kissing sessions (p. 246) though honorably marrying her in the end to secure *His personal* legal inheritance of David’s throne as well as *His bloodline’s* (p. 255) through Mary’s descent from Benjamin (p. 248)—thereby founding the Church on her, not on the apostles (pp. 248, 254)—all we can say is . . . Rubbish! This is not consistent with the apostolic witness to any of the history between these two, between them and the disciples, and (to) Jesus’ high view of marriage and celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom (Matthew 19:12). Jesus didn’t need a third link to David—one more than He had from Joseph (Matthew 1:6,17) and Mary (Luke 3:31). By resurrection to immortal life followed by ascension, He sat once-for-all-eternity on the throne of David as King (Luke 1:32; Acts 2:30; 13:34) and *spiritually* bequeathed the Kingdom to His Church (Colossians 1:13; Revelation 1:6).

Jews then, as people generally today, would repel the idea of “marry-in” royalty anyway. And since Titus destroyed records when he leveled Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the theory presumes

that Jews sneaked genealogical records out and hid them somewhere, much as they did the Dead Sea Scrolls. But even granting this, why would they pick Mary's? From all we know of her from the Gospels, she wasn't considered royalty by friend or foe, and the Jews collectively never thought highly enough of Jesus to attach any significance to the two of them as a pair. The Christian faith started out small—how would they know then that Jesus would become so prominent in the world?

***Mithras: Son of God Before Jesus?*** (cf. Teabing on *Jesus Christ* at the beginning) No problem for faith here. All the “deity” Mithras is and ever was, down to his royal socks, is given *earlier* in the Old Testament, *if we have to appeal to historic originality*. The “Son of God” makes a cameo appearance in Daniel's furnace (Daniel 3:25), but the *concept* of “sons of god” is much older—pre-Exodus (Hosea 11:1), pre-Flood (Genesis 6:2), *even* pre-Creation (Job 38:7; can't get much further back than that)! The Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection are all prophesied in Isaiah 53, His ascension in Psalm 2 and 110 (1000 B.C.). The point is, *Mithras is not “original,”* and . . . as for his birthday, December 25<sup>th</sup>? Happy Birthday Mithras! Christianity needs this date as much as it needs Santa and his elves.

*Nor does Christianity need historic originality.* An entire web-site you can find with Google is committed to the debate over how the myth (universal truth, not fable) of Mithras became historical fact in Jesus. One side of this debate wisely suggests and in our mind correctly argues that truth has nothing to do with chronological sequence. Truth is not true because it appears first in history or “appears” at all. A more valid model (one C.S. Lewis artfully mastered) starts with the premise that truth is timeless, universal, ubiquitous—everywhere and always. *You can't get away from it*—“not no[where] not nohow” to partially quote the Wizard of Oz, and to which we will add “not nowhen” (there *is* such a word in the dictionary)—*not even in pagan literature*. The Sovereign God who never leaves Himself without a witness (Acts 14:17), not even in hell (Psalms 139:8), puts some truth *even there*.

It's not His fault pagans can't see the pointers embedded in their own books. If they did, they'd exchange them for inductive-study Bibles. The best “Mythras” has to offer *and more* is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, just as all the perfections of God's Law are.

***Hidden Documents?*** Four chests of genealogical records don't amount to much if one covetous Pharisee or jealous woman started the whole thing. What good are they if the

linchpin, the very first record, is false?

Teabing himself concedes this difficulty:

“But what good is a documented genealogy of Christ’s bloodline?” Sophie asked. “It’s not proof. Historians could not possibly confirm its authenticity.” Teabing chuckled. “No more so than they can confirm the authenticity of the Bible.” “Meaning?” “Meaning that history is always written by the winners. When two cultures clash, the loser is obliterated, and the winner writes the history books—books which glorify their own cause and disparage the conquered foe. As Napoleon once said, ‘What is history, but a fable agreed upon?’” He smiled. “By its very nature history is always a one-sided account” (p. 256; the underline is our emphasis).

People started all kinds of rumors about Jesus *while* He was alive. Some accused Him of being a glutton and a drunkard (Matthew 11:19), others of His planning to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem (Matthew 26:61), still others of His casting out demons with the prince of demons (Mark 3:22). The Jews taught some to say that the disciples stole Jesus’ body (Matthew 28:13; this spark gapped to the twentieth century’s *The Passover Plot* by Hugh J. Schonfield—not very original!).

We don’t have to dump revelation to agree with Teabing’s “authenticity” stalemate (two paragraphs up).

The Bible is rational, self-authenticating Truth, meaning its veracity does not depend on historians. It’s impossible to give an authentic *meaning* to “proof”—that is, to *prove proof*. Proof has to be proven, then *that* proof has to be proven . . . and so on, ad infinitum! (Like the Energizer Bunny, “proof” just keeps going and going!) For this and other reasons, even radical, atheistic scientists reject “findings” of historians. Their (radical) methodology takes everything out of “proof” but replication: if they can’t reproduce *it* in the lab, they don’t believe *it*—*not even evolution*.

And that’s precisely the problem—you can’t ship “history” into a lab for empirical (scientific) testing. Think about what’s required to lab-prove that Jesus had children. Assuming it were found, it’s not enough to have Mary Magdalene’s body; she’s not a blood relative, and she could have had kids with other men. You really need both Jesus’ body and the body of one of his children—preferably a son. These two piles of dust have to be accurately nuclear-dated back 1934 years. They have to be identified by name—and what would that evidence be: a name tag, initialed belt buckle,

monogrammed tunic? Finally and most importantly, the ancient dust piles have to contain *intact* DNA, and even then, DNA testing has its own ambiguities (too technical to discuss).

“Proof,” at least the DNA kind, is very hard to come by! But then, *The Da Vinci Code* ends on the bleak note that *no object* (like an empty tomb . . . *not even a Holy Grail find*) *is necessary for a subjective faith to endure* (p. 444). To that extent, its basis for faith falls short of the objectivity offered in the movie *Raiders of The Lost Ark*. If you remember, toward the end Indiana Jones watched a *real object* (the Ark) ascend for a brief moment into the very heaven where John saw it last (Revelation 11:19). Faith *must* have an object; otherwise it’s just faith in faith—cockeyed optimism. And symbols that have as many meanings as there are people to interpret them (according to Symbologist Langdon, p. 25) make great subjects, but not very good objects.

### **The Bible on Conspiracies**

So much for *The Da Vinci Code*’s feeble though admittedly entertaining attempts to cast doubt on biblical Truth and aspersions at the motives of Christ’s invisible Church. God’s Kingdom remains unshakable . . . His Word, unassailable. A year or two from now, people will want to talk about this book about as much as they want to resurrect conversations now about “OJ’s trial.”

So let’s shift gears to *real* conspiracies (not theories) and the role you’re playing, hopefully not inadvertently. There are only two of these, and they are cosmic, compelling, and universal in scope. In the course of a lifetime, *each one of us becomes a co-conspirator in one of these two. So choose well, because the outcomes are irreversible and the stakes are eternal.*

Keeping in mind what we said at the beginning—that “conspire” is neutral (we can “plan” both good and bad things)—the first conspiracy, hidden in the heart of God from eternity past, was manifested in creation and redemption and revealed in the Scriptures. God conspired to create people in His image and redeem them when they fell. He determined to draw us with kindness and invite us to conspire with Him to do justice and love kindness, and also to walk humbly before Him (Micah 6:8).

The second conspiracy—to deceive and destroy God’s most precious creation—was conceived in Satan’s heart within history. He and his minions conspire to use every lie and weapon in their temporary, limited arsenal to seduce and take men down paths that seem right but end in destruction (Proverbs 14:12). His motive is bad, his goal death, his method deceit, and his medium darkness (big cover-ups). By contrast, God’s motive is good, his goal eternal life, his

method Truth, and his medium Light. God conspires truth because He is truth (John 3:33; Romans 3:4; 2 Corinthians 1:18); His Word is Truth (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17); His Son is Truth (John 14:6); and His Holy Spirit is Truth (1 John 5:6). God is Light and in Him is no darkness (Psalms 36:9; John 1:4; 16:13; 1 John 1:5).

This means God's truth is both public (Matthew 26:55: paraphrasing Jesus, *Why are you approaching Me like a conspirator, I taught publicly*) and simple (2 Corinthians 11:3), out in the open, not in dark recesses. It's not codified in cryptic symbols that only PhD-level cryptologists or intellectuals can decipher, and it's not buried like the Holy Grail out there in "Neverland." That's the moral bankruptcy of all conspiracy theories—truth reserved for the intellectually-elite *few*.

Now it's true that Jesus spoke in parables to the masses and explained them first to His few disciples, but those disciples later preached them to everyone. The Gospel of salvation was designed simply, so people could be saved *quickly and easily*. It would be cruel to dump a four-volume encyclopedia of Philosophy and Religion on the lap of a dying man begging for air *and truth* in his last few minutes, and demand that *he* figure it all out, just to be politically correct (neutral). Cryptologist Sophie Neveu admitted that her "expertise in [the] complex . . . caused her to overlook [the] simplistic," p. 97). The simplicity of Christ does that very thing; in fact, it's foolishness to those determined to be high-minded and arrogant (1 Corinthians 1:23).

Satan's conspiracy is summed up by one word—"darkness." At first glance he seems to have an edge, an advantage, since "men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). And he would, *if God left him alone*.

*But God never leaves the devil, his demons, or his malevolent human subjects alone.* He harasses darkness continually. How? One way He does this is *exposure*: God "reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness" (Daniel 2:22). Accordingly, Jesus said, "Do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known" (Matthew 10:26). Another method God uses is *judgment*: He will ". . . bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14, KJV); and He ". . . will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus" (Romans 2:16). God's keyboard has a restore key called "resurrection . . . of the unjust" (Acts 24:15). The unjust *and their injustices*, hidden or otherwise, will be resurrected for judgment. No

one will “get away with” anything.

Given these precious promises, it’s idolatrous to fear bad conspiracies *or* their perpetrators (1 Samuel 12:24). We can be absolutely confident that God will expose them sooner or later. He may do it in this life; He may wait till the next, but disclose them He will—publicly! The bats will be yanked out of their caves into sunlight! Not only will He open every *can* of worms, He’ll judge the *worms*. Imagine—the very worst of men *and demons*, all the bad conspiracies! *Could we ever have a more powerful incentive to be pure, to think the holy thoughts that produce holy actions?*

Some exposure and judgment will happen in *this* life: “His mischief will return upon his own head, and his violence will descend upon his own pate” (Psalm 7:16). All *bad* conspiracies self-destruct under this decree of God, but not all judgment waits for the Final Judgment. As the original line from the poem “To a Mouse” by Robert Burns puts it: “The best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men/ Gang aft a-gley [often go awry, haywire]”—every day.

Meanwhile, we need to diligently guard our *own* hearts because out of them flow the issues of life (Proverb 4:23). The Word says, “You have placed our iniquities before You, our *secret* sins in the light of Your presence” (Psalm 90:8, italics ours, cf. Luke 11:35).

What are you conspiring today? Will you co-conspire with God or the devil? Now’s the time to confess to God any bad motives you can find stored in the closet of your heart and repent. It’s time to conspire and do good, God’s good . . . for a good cause:

*“. . . so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15).*





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